



**Association of School Nurses of Connecticut**  
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TESTIMONY RE: H.B. NO. 5760, AN ACT CONCERNING PREVENTION  
STRATEGIES FOR VISION PROBLEMS IN YOUNG CHILDREN  
Public Health Select Committee Hearing  
February 26, 2007

To: Senator Handley, Representative Sayers and members of the Public Health Committee

From: The Association of School Nurses of Connecticut

Thank-you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding House Bill No. 5760, AN ACT CONCERNING PREVENTION STRATEGIES FOR VISION PROBLEMS IN YOUNG CHILDREN on behalf of the Association of School Nurses of Connecticut, the professional organization for school nurses in Connecticut. Our Association is opposed to this bill.

At the present time, vision screening is required for all children entering school. This screening is provided in family practice and pediatrician's offices and all "medical homes" that care for children and provide their care and physical examinations before they come to school. If there are problems that are identified during this screening, the child is referred to an optometrist or ophthalmologist for follow up assessment and treatment if needed. Some children entering school may be under care for vision problems that have been diagnosed and are being treated by specialists; they should not be mandated to have an additional exam prior to school entry. The current process of the primary care provider performing a screening as part of the mandated physical examination at the time of school entry has served thousands of students well.

Requiring students to have their eyes examined by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist would not only be expensive for many families but this would also require an additional medical visit which takes time, resulting in parents lost time from work. Most importantly, this requiring a vision examination by an optometrist or opthamologist will delay the entrance to school for some children. Finally, it is not clear



from this bill who would be expected to pay for the vision examination. However, if the family is financially unable to afford this exam, the burden would probably fall to the school district in order to ensure that the child enters school.

We urge the committee to reject this bill as it would not improve care for children and would create financial burdens on families, third party payers and school districts.

We are available for additional information and consultation about this issue.